

Message Text

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12

ACTION NEA-12

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FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 5064

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

S E C R E T JIDDA 4239

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SU, SA

SUBJECT: VISIT OF SAUDI FINANCIER KASHOGGI

REF KHARTOUM 2181

1. AS EMBASSY/KHARTOUM NO DOUBT AWARE FROM RECENT PUBLICITY, KASHOGGI IS SAUDI ARABIA'S RICHEST AND MOST INFLUENTIAL NON-ROYAL BUSINESSMAN. HE HAS LONG HAD CLOSE TIES WITH PRINCE SULTAN, MINDEF AND AVIATION, AND APPARENTLY ALSO HAS GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH PRINCE FAHD, MININT AND HEAD OF SUPREME PETROLEUM COUNCIL. KASHOGGI IS PRIME MOVER IN RECENT "PETROSAT" PROPOSAL, INVOLVING SALE HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS OF SAUDI OIL TO AS YET UNBUILT REFINERIES IN US. ALTHOUGH FAHD INDICATED INTEREST IN PROPOSAL AT TIME OF PRESENTATION, EMBASSY HAS HEARD NO FURTHER REACTION.

2. IT IS APPARENT THAT KASHOGGI IS INTERESTED IN PAINTING NEW AND MORE FAVORABLE PICTURE OF SELF AS ARAB FINANCIER USING HIS MILLIONS TO ADVANCE DEVELOPMENT IN ARAB COUNTRIES. AT SAME TIME, EMBASSY RECALLS THAT SUDAN HAS EARLIER ASKED FOR SAUDI HELP IN FINANCING OIL REFINERY. THUS IT WOULD APPEAR THAT

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KASHOGGI IS ATTEMPTING PUT TOGETHER COMMERCIAL PACKAGE BENEFI-

CIAL TO SUDAN, AND IN WHICH HE MIGHT REASONABLY EXPECT SAG TO BE INTERESTED. IT MAY BE THAT KASHOGGI HAS DISCUSSED PROJECT INFORMALLY WITH VARIOUS SAG MINISTERS SUCH AS OIL MINISTER YAMANI OR PRINCES FAHD AND SULTAN. EMBASSY SURE, HOWEVER, THAT OFFICIAL SAG BACKING, WHICH WOULD NECESSITATE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS' AND KING'S APPROVAL, HAS NOT BEEN OBTAINED. MORE LIKELY WAY FOR KASHOGGI TO OPERATE WOULD BE TO PUT TOGETHER COMPLETE PACKAGE WITH SUDANESE BLESSING WHICH HE WOULD THEN PRESENT TO SAG IF HE NEEDED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

3. IN VIEW RELATIVELY GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN NUMAIRI AND SAG, AND SAUDI DESIRE BRING AS MANY ARAB MODERATES IN THEIR COURT AS POSSIBLE, SAG MIGHT WELL BE WILLING ASSIST AS NECESSARY. HOWEVER, TWO FACTS SHOULD BE KEPT IN MIND: KNOWN ANTIPATHY OF KING FAISAL TO KASHOGGI, AND LIKELIHOOD THAT WHATEVER VENTURE KASHOGGI BACKS WILL INVOLVE LARGE PROFIT FOR HIM.
HORAN

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